

Doyle Undergraduate Fellows

2014-2015





About the Doyle Engaging Difference Program

The Doyle Engaging Difference Program is a campus-wide collaboration between the Berkley Center and the Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS) to strengthen Georgetown University's core commitment to tolerance and diversity and to enhance global awareness of the challenges and opportunities of an era of increasing interconnectedness. Doyle faculty fellowships support the redesign of lower-level courses to incorporate themes of cultural, religious, and other forms of difference, while Doyle Seminars facilitate in-depth explorations of similar themes in smaller, upper-level courses. In addition to curricular innovation, the Doyle Program supports the Junior Year Abroad Network, through which Hoyas blog about their encounters with diverse host societies, and Doyle student fellows, who engage intercultural and interreligious dialogue on campus. The program is made possible through the generosity of William Doyle (C'72), chair of the Georgetown University Board of Directors.

About the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University, created within the Office of the President in 2006, is dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of religion, ethics, and public life. Through research, teaching, and service, the center explores global challenges of democracy and human rights; economic and social development; international diplomacy; and interreligious understanding. Two premises guide the center's work: that a deep examination of faith and values is critical to address these challenges, and that the open engagement of religious and cultural traditions with one another can promote peace.

INTRODUCTION

Engaging with cultural and religious difference is an integral component of the Georgetown educational experience. The Doyle Engaging Difference Program, a collaboration with the Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS), supports Berkley Center's Doyle Seminars program, the Junior Year Abroad Program (JYAN), and Doyle student fellows. Part of the Doyle Engaging Difference Program, the Undergraduate Fellows program brings faculty, staff, and students together to foster student engagement with diversity and difference and to reflect upon the diversity of human experience through scholarship and interreligious/intercultural engagement on campus and around the world.

In 2014, the Berkley Center selected 11 students from diverse backgrounds to participate in the Undergraduate Fellows Program through a competitive application and interview process. Fellows met monthly during the academic year and participated in several interfaith dialogue and service activities individually and as a group. They worked under the guidance of program leader Melody Fox Ahmed (Assistant Director for Programs, Berkley Center), faculty advisor Professor Marilyn McMorrow (Department of Government), and graduate student advisor Sara Singha (Department of Theology). During this inaugural year, the program focused on both on campus and off campus interreligious and intercultural dialogue and service. During the fall semester, students were asked to look 'inward' to their 'nuclear communities' on the Georgetown campus. Fellows were encouraged to attend religious services outside their faith tradition, participate in service projects on campus, and write reflection papers describing their experiences.

During the spring semester, the Doyle Fellows participated in interfaith dialogue and service projects off campus while thinking more broadly about 'engaging difference' in their neighborhoods and communities. Fellows attended off campus worship services, intercultural events, and participated in community service projects. They also engaged in dialogue with religious leaders, and interviewed social activists and community organizers in DC to learn from their experiences. Organizations the group worked with in DC included Faith in Action DC, IFCMW, Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign, DC Jobs with Justice, So Others Might Eat, and many local religious congregations. Several fellows attended the DC Young Adult Faith Leaders Summit in February 2015 with the Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington at the Church of Latter Day Saints in Chevy Chase, MD. By focusing on the diversity both on campus and in Washington DC, fellows were able to draw meaningful parallels and conclusions about the importance of interacting with others in order to understand different faith traditions and perspectives.

Some fellows also attended a conference on religion and peacebuilding in Middle East hosted by Brigham Young University and an interfaith student conference hosted by Yale University. Fellows also rallied for social change, attending and writing about vigils and protests held around the extraordinary events of the past year: the terrorist attack on school children in Peshawar, Pakistan; the killing of African Americans in Ferguson; the killing of Muslim students in Chapel Hill; and a homophobic protest by Westboro Baptist Church at Georgetown University. Students discussed and wrote about how race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion were involved in these conflicts and the potential for interreligious dialogue to offer healing. Finally, students spent the year conducting independent research projects on diverse topics including, "Deafness and Christianity," "Faith and the Arts," "Overcoming Stereotypes of the Muslim Community through Storytelling," "New Approaches to Teaching Diversity through the Curriculum," "Political Theatre in South Asia," and "DC Faith-Inspired Organizations Working to End Poverty." Two students, Spencer Crawford and Timothy Loh, presented their research at the annual White House event, "The President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge," held in September 2015 at Howard University.



TEACHING INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AT GEORGETOWN

INTRODUCTION

Interreligious dialogue is one of the tenants of a Jesuit education and one of the goals of Georgetown University's core curriculum. The theology requirement at Georgetown University, known as the "Problem of God" boasts a diverse range of courses that are reflective of the central values of Jesuit education—to explore the religious dimensions of human experience; to wrestle with questions of faith, belief, and reason; and to examine the connection between God, humanity, and social justice. At the beginning of the program, Doyle Fellows were asked to reflect on the implications of studying religion at Georgetown as part of the core curriculum. Fellows described the impact of these required theology courses, which enabled them to discuss the broader implications of religion in a socio-political and cultural context.

REFLECTING ON STUDYING RELIGION AT GEORGETOWN

Doyle Fellows shared multiple stories to illustrate how the Jesuit commitment to interreligious dialogue led them to seek opportunities for religious and cultural exchange. Because students were encouraged to engage religious diversity in class, this enabled them to examine their own traditions and belief systems. Fellows suggested that looking inward toward their own spiritual traditions encouraged them to pursue interreligious encounters on campus: For some fellows, this occurred through participation in religious organizations, religious events, services, and interfaith dialogue. Student reflections suggest that there is a direct connection between studying religion academically and negotiating the boundaries of interfaith relationships socially. On campus, fellows were able

IMAGE: Father Constantine White, Reverend Bryant Oskvig, and Imam Hendi.

to utilize the training they received in class to form friendships with students who were outside their faith community, their culture, and belief systems. These relationships also enabled fellows to strengthen their religious commitments and become more active in their own faith traditions.

NOREEN SAJWANI, MUSLIM STUDENT:

I wanted to learn more about what it meant to be at a Catholic, Jesuit institution. This curiosity developed into an urge to learn what it meant to engage particularly in the Jesuit value of “interreligious dialogue,” which I pursued by later becoming the chair of the Interfaith Student Association and eventually serving on the Campus Ministry Executive Committee as the Council of Advisory Boards (CAB) representative for Campus Ministry, a position I hold today. I attended conferences like the Interfaith Youth Core and the National Jesuit Student Leadership Conference, took classes like the one on “Religion in American Political Life,” and even spoke at the President’s Interfaith Service Challenge at Georgetown last fall. All of these things allowed me to recognize that I simply love learning about religion and led me to this minor in Theology.

KATIE ROSENBERG, CATHOLIC STUDENT:

Before coming to Georgetown, I had never taken a religious studies course [...] That changed, however, with a required course I took during my freshman year at Georgetown: “The Problem of God.” In this class, we were taught to study religion objectively, thoughtfully, carefully, and critically. It was an eye-opening experience, and one that has made a profound impact on my time at Georgetown and my academic interests. By the end of that year, I was a declared Theology major and knew I wanted to spend my four years at Georgetown studying religion and the ways in which it impacts and affects people’s lives around the world [...] Now, ten theology classes in, I am just as passionate about the study of religion as I was when I first discovered it three years ago [...] Theology is so much more than the study of the divine: it is history, literature, ethics, philosophy, performance, anthropology...It is fundamentally the study of the human condition: how we live and what we live for.

EMILY COCCIA, CATHOLIC STUDENT:

While I came into class with fourteen years of Catholic school education and extensive knowledge of the Bible and the catechism, I had an opportunity to read Jewish midrashim, *Summa Theologica*, and the *Bhagavad Gita* alongside philosophical texts from thinkers like Kant, Freud, and Nietzsche. I left the

class with a profound appreciation of the diversity of thought that existed, not just in some abstract concept of the “wider world,” but within the gates of Georgetown itself. Each day I was impressed by my fellow students and left with a deep respect for their faith commitments. [...] Talking to students at other universities, I have found that this sort of experience is something that makes Georgetown unique, even among other religiously affiliated universities. Rather than simply allowing for and hoping that these sorts of conversations will happen, Georgetown carves out a space for them and actively works to promote interreligious understanding.

MUAAZ MAKSUD, MUSLIM STUDENT:

Georgetown University provided an unprecedented platform for engaging in interfaith and intercultural dialogue. For the first time in my life, I was proud to express my identity as a Muslim, getting involved in the Muslim Students Association on campus, and comfortable to participate in interfaith events that were held in abundance around campus.

EMNA BACCAR, MUSLIM STUDENT:

I also study theology because I believe that interfaith and intrafaith dialogue is critical towards creating understanding and peaceful relations between and within different faith and non-faith communities. My past experiences and my love for my faith and its vision for peace have encouraged me to be extremely involved in Georgetown’s Muslim Students Association, as well as interfaith dialogue both on and off campus.



ENGAGING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS AND IN DC

ENGAGING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS

Knowledge of and meaningful encounter with the ‘Other’ are key strategies for building interfaith cooperation. As such, college campuses are uniquely suited to address these challenges and promote intercultural respect between students. As Eboo Patel, the founder of Interfaith Youth Core argues, “Colleges and universities often serve as microcosms of America’s broader religious diversity, where students of different faiths regularly interact with one another in close quarters, often for the first time. This happens in a space where they are encouraged to question, challenge, and explore their own identities and those of others.” For many fellows, the “Problem of God” theology courses create a burgeoning appreciation for interreligious dialogue and intercultural diver-

sity and the Georgetown campus serves as the ‘microcosm’ for the religious and intercultural diversity that exists beyond the college gates.

Because of the distinctive role of universities in fostering these relationships, the Doyle Fellows Program was structured to invigorate student engagement with ‘difference.’ During the first semester, fellows were encouraged to seek interreligious encounters and forge intercultural relationships in multiple ways. On campus, Doyle Fellows attended a wide range of religious services outside their own faith tradition. Entering these unfamiliar sacred spaces had a profound effect on many fellows. The churches, mosques, temples, and meditation centers which the students visited functioned as a method to connect their academic investigation to their spiritual curiosity. For many fellows, this activity enabled them to connect deeply with other religious

IMAGE: Doyle Fellows at the 2015 President’s Interfaith & Community Service Campus Challenge

traditions in a tangible way and encouraged them to re-evaluate the importance of religious diversity on campus.

The following excerpts reveal how visiting these sacred spaces empowered the Doyle Fellows to navigate unfamiliar religious terrain with respectful curiosity and decorum:

EMNA BACCAR (MUSLIM STUDENT ATTENDING A CATHOLIC MASS)

When Father Michael delivered the homily (the similarities I noticed between Islam and Christianity) increased, including the idea of a God of peace. Or the emphasis on taking the straight path to God, which he said is from the book of Isaiah, a phrase which Muslims repeat at least 17 times a day in our daily prayers, asking God to guide us to the straight path. Father Michael even referenced Islam in his homily, quoting the Qur'an, which states that God is closer to humans than their jugular veins. Lastly, towards the end of Mass Father O'Brien encouraged us to greet each other with peace, which two of my neighbors so graciously did saying, "Peace be with you," reminding me of how Muslims extend this greeting towards each other at every meeting.

TIM LOH (PROTESTANT STUDENT ATTENDING A MUSLIM SERVICE)

This was my first time attending a Jum'ah: I had wanted to for some time, ever since I began taking Arabic in my freshman year at Georgetown, but something always came up. The stars had aligned today, and I found myself at the Friday prayer service. [...] I knew little about Islam beyond basics like who the Prophet Muhammad was and that Ramadan was the month of fasting. Now I was at my first Jum'ah—in Arabic, no less—but I still was not quite sure what to expect. There was no time to worry as the imam began, standing at the front of the room and speaking loudly such that his voice carried to the back of the room, where a couple of women I had not noticed before were sitting, separate from the men. People continue to file into the room after the imam had begun speaking, but did so quietly so as not to disturb the others. They left their bags and shoes under or on the tables lined alongside the room, walked to the floor in front of the imam, and bowed for a few moments in prayer before sitting down. I was impressed by everyone listening with such rapt attention to the imam—not a single person was talking.

SPENCER CRAWFORD (CATHOLIC STUDENT ATTENDING A HINDU SERVICE)

We started the service by chanting "All that was, all that is, and all that will be," the word Om. The weighty implication of this

word signifies numerous beliefs to Hindus. I experienced a profound metaphor in the act of chanting Om. In a chant, it is possible to distinguish numerous, discrete voices with varying pitches and volumes, yet this cacophony of voices heard in unison punctuates only one Om. It is one thing, yet it is everything. The invocation of Om denotes a time to meditate and reflect. All over the world Hindus worship in countless ways and in many languages, yet in all of these varying voices, all intone the same Om. The word acts as a connecting thread, one in which I felt a part during its incantation. In the rhythmic chanting, I felt similarly to how I feel when we chant the Nicene Creed or say the Lord's Prayer at Mass. However, the simplicity and universality in chanting Om gave me more time to reflect than I normally can during my own form of Catholic prayer.

AYAN MANDAL (HINDU STUDENT ATTENDING CATHOLIC MASS)

Throughout my six years in my evangelical Protestant school, I was always conflicted as to whether or not I should sing the hymns during chapel. My first years, I would never. The services were alien to me and made me shrivel with discomfort. I figured that my Hindu faith exempted me from engaging with the surrounding religious body. I remembered my mother's warnings to not let my teachers convert me, so I drew a solid line between my faith and theirs. [...] Last Sunday, I went to Catholic Mass. [...] As the reception of the Eucharist approached, the question augmented like a burgeoning balloon. Do I partake, or do I merely observe? Do I emphasize my individuality as a Hindu, or do I submit myself to this foreign religious body? Well, I was hungry, so I ate the bread. [...] This doesn't make me Catholic, and nor does it make me less Hindu. It just means that I don't draw lines, and that I am willing to worship God in all of His various manifestations.

TIMOTHY ROSENBERGER (PROTESTANT STUDENT ATTENDING A JEWISH SERVICE)

I was particularly happy to have the opportunity to participate in Georgetown Jewish Chaplaincy's Halloween Pride Shabbat event. Cosponsored with GUPride and the LGBT Center, this service welcomed a wide array of students, all in fantastic costumes, to join together in worship and reflection before going their separate ways to engage in Halloween merriment. Rabbi Rachel Gartner and her regular attendees were well prepared for the massive influx of outsiders and made us all feel included and welcome. I was particularly impressed by the logistical effort that allowed Shabbat to be seamlessly moved to a larger venue at the last minute and provided prayer caps for all men in attendance. [...] Students were actively engaging with their

belief and with the ethical issues that it raised. The entire point of their reflection and exercise was to see how they could use their faith, and their minds, to serve the world in a God-pleasing manner [...] In all, I recognized students from five different faith communities in attendance. As we piled out of the space, it was interesting to hear student conversations tying the service they had just experienced with classes or with their own faith traditions. Georgetown had, as is so often the case, raised my bar for interfaith engagement.

DEVIKA RANJAN (HINDU STUDENT ATTENDING A GOSPEL SERVICE)

During the gospel service, I wondered about the universality of prayer through music. Hinduism has a similar tradition of musicality through prayer; my grandfather believes that he best connects with the divine through his devotional songs. I have also seen music used widely in Jewish prayer services, Islamic *jum'ah* prayer, and Buddhist meditation. Although quantifiably immeasurable, I would love to understand what draws worshippers to musical devotion. Perhaps it is the feeling of blending harmonies with a group, the joy of solidarity, musical connection with our innermost selves, a form of ethereal and personal communication. Whatever fundamental spirituality is found in music, Gospel Choir's soulfulness was warmly cathartic. Each member of the choir expressed their communal belief, happiness, and gratefulness to God through the songs.

NOREEN SAJWANI (MUSLIM STUDENT ATTENDING JEWISH SERVICE)

Having attended a Hindu puja, Catholic Mass, and Buddhist meditation service before, I decided to attend the Jewish Shabbat service to gain a new perspective on a religious tradition I have not delved into much while at Georgetown. [...] One thing I loved about the service was that there were a variety of ways to be involved. For example, there was a portion where Rabbi Rachel told us to silently read a page and then say aloud the words that resonated with us the most. Another thing we did involved singing stanzas, while we recited other portions of the prayers. Towards the end, there was a small break in the service where we were told to introduce ourselves to others we didn't know and speak to them for a bit. [...] Although one of my best friends at Georgetown is Jewish, I think I've been so concerned in drawing parallels between Christianity and Islam that I've lost sight of the idea that all faiths share some rites, rituals, and practices across traditions that make them similar. This service helped remind me of that and pushed me to learn more not only about Judaism but seek to find those parallels through interfaith dialogue and prayer.

ENGAGING INTERRELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN DC

Encountering and examining religious diversity on campus resulted in meaningful exchange for Doyle Fellows and their peers at Georgetown. Students then went beyond the campus gates into the greater DC area to seek further interreligious and intercultural interaction. Students attended an unfamiliar religious service outside their own faith tradition in the DC area. This enabled them to "engage diversity" outside the safety of the campus environment and to realize the broader implications of interreligious dialogue nationally, and globally. Students reflected on their experiences through blogs on the Berkley Center website.

KATIE ROSENBERG (CATHOLIC STUDENT ATTENDING HINDU SERVICE)

This was the first time I had ever been exposed to the Hindu faith in any significant way; I was struck by the welcoming and reflective nature of this beautiful tradition. [...] As I entered, I took my shoes off in the lobby and stepped inside. The temple floor was enormous—about the size of a large department store—and held a total of 17 different shrines to Hindu gods, many of which are replicas of shrines that can be found in India. Each shrine holds its own significance, story, and set of prayers. [...] There was a profound sense of inclusion at the temple. This Hindu community of friends and believers welcomed me to their faith tradition with open arms, never once questioning whether I belonged, was knowledgeable, or acceptable to partake in it. As long as I was willing to participate respectfully, they were willing to have me. I think this is what interreligious experience is all about: welcoming one another to explore and grow in faith, and to recognize that every tradition, like every person, holds an intrinsic value of its own.

TIM LOH (PROTESTANT STUDENT ATTENDING ARAB CHRISTIAN SERVICE)

Washington, DC boasts its own Arab Christian population, a good number of whom attend the Arabic Baptist Church of Washington, DC (ABCDC) on Massachusetts Avenue. Set up in 1967, the church has been around for about 50 years now, making it possibly the oldest Arabic-speaking congregation across the United States, according to one of the members I spoke with. [...] I was particularly struck by two parts of the service: the sermon and a hymn that was sung. The sermon was based on Adam and Eve's encounter with God in Genesis 3 and focused on one line in the passage when God goes out into the Garden of Eden in "search" of Adam and asks, "*ayna 'anta?*" (Where are you?). That question, the preacher said, was

one that we should constantly be asking ourselves in different aspects of our lives, whether physically (*jasadiyyan*), psychologically (*nafsiyyan*), intellectually (*fikriyyan*), or spiritually (*ruhiyyan*), and concluded that our answer should be “*ya rabb, ‘ana ma’ak*” (Lord, I am with you). His sermon was a powerful reminder of Jesuit notions of contemplation in action, cura personalis, and finding God in all things—values frequently stressed here at Georgetown but which I often forget in the midst of busyness.

TIMOTHY ROSENBERGER (PROTESTANT STUDENT ATTENDING BAPTIST SERVICE)

Attending a Southern Baptist church is somewhat of an unusual choice for me. Raised as a Lutheran, I am customarily uninterested in services that use guitars rather than more traditional instruments. I prefer a more structured liturgy and a little bit more ritual than I find at this church. [...] As I realized during the service, my experiences and understanding of scripture lead me to different conclusions than those reached by some members of CHBC. I certainly believe that my actions are in line with scripture and with a desire to follow God. Although some people at the church have arrived at very different conclusions they nonetheless have been gracious and welcoming, knowing full well that my background and beliefs are slightly different, and have been open to even-handed dialogue. I know that I do not have all the answers, and I am open to learning from this lovely community.

EMNA BACCAR (MUSLIM STUDENT ATTENDING JEWISH SERVICE)

While I could dwell on the similarities between Judaism and Islam, and the parallels between our prayer services, of which there are many, I really want to focus on the overwhelming kindness of the congregation and how that colored our experience. Most of the congregants were older, and three of them came over as the lady who had brought us in talked to us, shook our hands, and welcomed us warmly. Meanwhile, the lady excitedly told us about the prayer, showed us the book that we would read from, and explained what we would be doing. In fact, as we sat in the front row, she repeatedly explained each and every prayer throughout the entire 20 minute service of Hebrew recitations, making sure we were keeping up and helping to instruct us. [...] As someone who is clearly from a different faith, especially as a visible Muslim, I was a little scared to go to an off-campus religious service, fearing that I would not be in the same safe, welcoming, interfaith environment we are so privileged to have at Georgetown. Also, while I do not feel like the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a religious one, I still feared that someone who does view it as so would feel some animosity towards me. While this

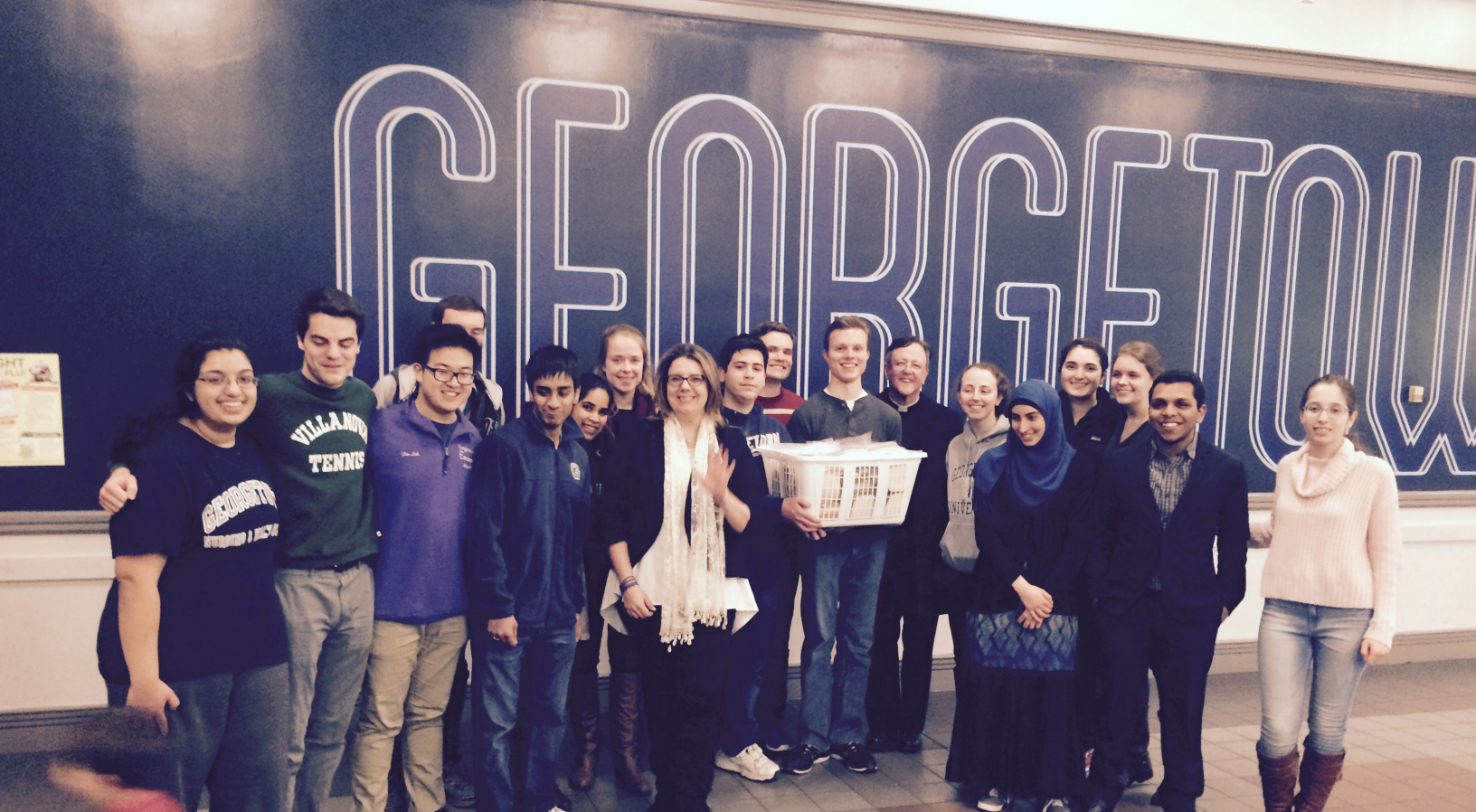
may be true of some places, I was grateful for experiencing the exact opposite at Adas Israel.

BRITTANY NEIHARDT (AGNOSTIC STUDENT ATTENDING BAPTIST SERVICE)

Last Sunday I travelled across Washington, DC to the Southern Baptist Church Praise and Worship Center near L Street and 1st Street downtown. [...] What was extremely impressive to me was the intense feeling of community present in the church. I had walked into a family. [...] Throughout the service, the men would rise to offer a musical celebration of God’s power. When the preacher delivered his sermon on the importance of love and family, I felt the continued energy of the service. Church members would shout out in support of the preacher’s words. In fact, the preacher responded most strongly when he heard energetic calls from the pews. [...] As the service continued...I found myself clapping and head nodding along with the preacher’s words. I hadn’t yet reached a level of fully expressing myself during the service like the rest of the congregation, but I was getting there. [...] I would certainly return again in order to feel that sense of closeness with people I had just met. It’s remarkable to walk into a space and feel instantly like you belong.

MUA AZ MAKSUD (MUSLIM STUDENT ATTENDING CATHOLIC MASS)

I was very nervous, yet intrigued and excited for my first experience of Catholic Mass. [...] Towards the end of the Mass, Father Murray asked the congregants to greet each other with peace. The man next to me, turned to me, shook my hand, and said “May peace be with you.” I was amazed. I replied with the same greeting. The lady in front of me turned around and did the exact same thing – “May peace be with you.” As I was continuously greeted with peace and offered those around me peace, I couldn’t help but reflect on this wonderful moment. I found such comfort. Muslims around the world, regardless of their language or culture, are familiar with this universal greeting, “As-Salaam Alaikum,” which translates to “May peace be with you.” In fact, it is highly encouraged for Muslims to always greet each other and bid farewell with this “As-Salaam Alaikum.” This notion of greeting the other with peace is so ingrained within me that I sometimes, by habit, say “As-Salaam Alaikum” to my non-Muslim friends, leaving them confused until I explain the concept. These greetings at my first ever Mass left a lasting impression on me, as I left the chapel and bid Father Murray on my way out with “May peace be with you.”



INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, SERVICE, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN DC

Interreligious dialogue and service have social and theological ramifications that extend beyond the academy. Service projects enable students to explore their personal and communal goals of civic engagement and social justice within the context of a diverse society. “Service-learning” encourages students to reflect critically and analytically on course content and helps to translate academic investigation into practice. Doyle Fellows chose service opportunities that encouraged them to work collaboratively and examine notions of difference and commonality. Students worked through a wide variety of programs including “interfaith sandwich making,” feeding the homeless, and working with underprivileged school children in DC. These programs assisted the fellows with active learning, integrating the theory of “interreligious engagement” with the practical reality, and deepening their understanding of social problems in the community. Students recorded their experiences through blogs on the Berkley Center

website. The following are representative excerpts from student reflections:

STUDENT REFLECTIONS ON RELIGION, SERVICE, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

MUAAZ MAKSUD

For the past two years, I have consistently participated in an Interfaith Sandwich Making service program on campus, preparing and delivering sandwiches to the Georgetown Ministry Center, an institution that aims to provide the chronically homeless in Georgetown with stability and housing. Such activities only touch the tip of the iceberg with regards to what Georgetown has had to offer, allowing me to further my own understanding

IMAGE: Doyle Fellows Interfaith Sandwich Making Project

of different faiths and cultures and fostering a community that strives for a peaceful coexistence—the ideal I often questioned.

SPENCER CRAWFORD

In the wake of horrific events occurring at UNC Chapel Hill, we are scarily reminded of the extent of bigotry that still exists here in our own country against our own citizens, our own neighbors, today. [...] In a geographic context, there is simply a lack of interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims that enables these misconceptions. Muslims comprise 1 percent of the American population; consequentially, only 40 percent of Americans claim that they even know a Muslim. [...] In this context, dialogue could not be more important. True dialogue is achieved when equals share a space—such as a university—and work, worship, and pray together. In this permeable interaction, conversations of religious and ethical ideas between people from different faiths have the potential to enable us to see the “other” as more of a brother than a stranger.

EMNA BACCAR

It is because of the importance of charity to my faith that in the early morning I made my way over to a local mosque to assist in distributing food to the poor from their weekly food bank. [...] However, by the end of my experience I was also extremely disappointed in what I saw. The food would get damaged from the way it was packed, making it difficult to carry for those who came. Additionally, while the quality of the food was good in general, a good half of the cans given were dented and a majority of the fruit was bruised and old. [...] For me, these actions presented barriers to giving charity in the proper Islamic spirit. The Prophet once said to love for your brother what you would love for yourself, and this includes charity. Giving the needy bruised and barely edible fruit, along with damaged food because of carelessness, contradicts this spirit.

TIMOTHY LOH

Based on service, immersion, and reflection, ABP (Alternative Breaks Program) sends groups of 12 to 18 Georgetown students all over the United States every year to spend their spring break learning about various social justice issues; aside from the issue of mental health. Negative experiences we heard during our visits to Advocates, Prakash Ellenhorn, the Western Mass Recovery Learning Community, and the William B. Rice Eventide Home, among others, affected us deeply and forced us to grapple with the implications of such stories and what we could ourselves do for the issue of mental health at Georgetown. [...] Throughout the journey, I appreciated going through the learning process with my ABP group. Community

was built in both the happy moments of singalongs, laughter, and fun in the van as well as in the more serious moments as we reflected on the things we had learned. We discussed important questions like the efficacy of psychiatric medication, the role of agency in mental healthcare, and talked about how to put our newly-gained knowledge to use at Georgetown and what it means practically to put the Jesuit value of care for the whole person into action.

BRITTANY NEIHARDT

As I walked back to campus from an inspiring lunch, I was shocked to see neon signs with vitriolic slurs bobbing outside the front gates of Georgetown. Members and supporters of the Westboro Baptist Church shouted anti-homosexual hatred toward Healy Tower. [...] Perhaps my favorite sign this afternoon asked, “Why can’t we all just get along?” I ask myself the same question all too frequently. It truly shouldn’t be so difficult to reconcile our beliefs and live side by side. However, history proves that this is, indeed, a monumental task. I feel optimistic that it is possible, though. Slowly, society is making progress. From one side of the front gates, today may have seemed like a step back. However, on the other side, one saw joined hands and a crowd that far outnumbered that of the protestors. This is why I am hopeful. There can be change if we continually reject such vitriolic claims made in the name of religion.

KATIE ROSENBERG

On Tuesday, February 3, several of the Doyle Undergraduate Fellows gathered in Hoya Court in the Leavey Center to participate in “Interfaith Sandwich Making,” an event put on by the Orthodox Christian Fellowship. [...] Faith didn’t have much to do with it; there was nothing particularly Christian, Jewish, or Muslim about the event... Rather, it was simply a gathering of people who, for a variety of reasons, felt the call to support their community in an easy and effective way. Whether this was based on a particular religious conviction—or no conviction at all—people gathered together to complete a task. And that task, in turn, benefited the community. I think this is the best, most idyllic version of religion—especially in relation to interfaith dialogue. This event exemplified that when it comes to service, it doesn’t matter what you believe, or why you believe it. If your beliefs call you to serve—and to serve with others that may think differently than you—that is for the good.



RESEARCHING INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

Doyle Fellows conducted a year-long investigative project that explored the connections between religion, dialogue, and social justice issues on a national and global level. Projects were diverse and reflected the range of student interests. Some fellows explored the diversity of their own religious traditions while others chose to critically analyze how religion and politics intersect in the international context. These projects reveal the broader implications of the Doyle Engaging Difference Program as a co-curricular method to enable students to think more critically about religion, culture, and politics.

DOYLE FELLOWS FINAL PROJECTS

“OVERCOMING STEREOTYPES OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY THROUGH STORYTELLING”

EMNA BACCAR

Throughout my four years at Georgetown, I met Muslims from Bangladesh, Bosnia, China, Eritrea, India, Iran, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan,

and many more other countries. What was fascinating is that Islam itself, as universal as it is, came in diverse forms. Going to college in such a multi-cultural environment showed me that the same religion could have infinite manifestations as practice fuses with already existing cultures and norms of a given region. In this project, I explored the role of stereotyping and its effects on Western Muslims. I researched how negative or simplistic notions about religious practice coupled with misinformation can create biases and exacerbate prejudice.

“NEW APPROACHES TO TEACHING DIVERSITY THROUGH THE CURRICULUM”

EMILY COCCIA

In my project, I interviewed professors who promote an inclusive pedagogy to provide a paradigm for other faculty members to teach diversity. This project seeks to create a framework of pedagogical “best practices”—recognizing the value of hearing from faculty already engaged in this work and moving toward diverse syllabi and inclusive classroom atmospheres across the

IMAGE: Clara Gustafson speaks at an interfaith service.

disciplines. Conversations of race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, class, (dis)ability, and other identity categories should span the curriculum, rather than only existing in isolation in an “Intro to x studies” course. Issues of privilege and oppression always occur in context, and allowing students to recognize these intersections will prepare them to become understanding citizens who fight for social justice in the workplace, classroom, and in everyday interactions. I argue that introducing conversations about privilege in the classroom and sculpting a syllabus to include historically marginalized voices—be they raced, gendered, classed, or sexed others—force students to question their assumptions about who has a right to be heard in the academy.

“IS SHARED SPACE REALLY SACRED? SACRED SPACE AND ITS PURPOSE ON GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY’S CAMPUS: MUSLIM, JEWISH, AND HINDU STUDENT INSIGHT”

SPENCER CRAWFORD

My report was based on research and in-depth interviews with faith-leaders from the Muslim, Jewish, and Hindu communities about sacred spaces on Georgetown’s campus. Analyses of the interviews lead to five key insights. First, sacred space may not be the most important component of a student’s worship life on campus, but a worship space fosters a sense of community. Second, the word “shared” needs to be nuanced in light of how spaces are actually divided among groups. Third, sharing physical space may not lead to robust dialogue, but interfaith learning occurs in encounters with students from other faiths. Fourth, Georgetown has and should continue to be creative with utilizing space for worship on a constrained campus. Fifth, Georgetown’s Catholic and Jesuit identity plays a unique supporting role in the growth of their spiritual lives.

“THOU SHALT NOT CURSE A DEAF MAN”

TIMOTHY LOH

My research project focused on differing discourses of deafness and disability in Christianity, through anthropological methods of participant observation, qualitative interviews, and surveys. This project was premised on the idea that Deafness and Christianity both have some truth claims that sometimes come into conflict, and I explored how Deaf Christians reconcile these competing ideas. In undertaking this project, I had to negotiate the boundaries between insider and outsider was a constant balancing act. As always, there remained the question of privilege: by virtue of being hearing I did not have to face many of the systematic obstacles and institutionalized

discrimination that deaf people faced and continue to face. No matter the depth of my involvement, deafness for me always remained (and arguably, would always remain) an academic interest rather than a lived experience, a social reality.

“INSPIRED BY FAITH: DC FAITH-INSPIRED ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO END POVERTY”

MUAAZ MAKSUD

In my project, I explored the larger DC social justice community and focused on organizations inspired by faith to improve society, specifically in the field of poverty and education. I conducted research on various organizations such as the Washington City Church of the Brethren, Loaves and Fishes, and St. Augustine’s Young Adult Association that provide food to the homeless and the underprivileged. I also studied organizations like the ADAMS Center, Operation Understanding DC, and the DC Bahai Community that offer experiential education programs in an effort to not only foster moral and spiritual development, but also promote understanding and peace. I analyzed the motivation behind these organizations and their commitment to social justice. I found that faith and social justice are directly linked and many organizations are centered on a commitment to both social and spiritual values.

“SOCIAL JUSTICE WARRIORS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE NAXALITE MOVEMENT AND THE ARYA SAMAJ IN LATE 20TH CENTURY INDIA”

AYAN MANDAL

In this research project, I argued that the recent election of Narendra Modi, questions religion’s place in politics within India’s national consciousness. Modi comes from the Bharatiya Janata Party, India’s Hindu nationalist political party. Hindu nationalism carries with it a long, convoluted history; on the one hand, Hindu nationalism helped inspire India’s Independence, but on the other hand, a Hindu nationalist assassinated the poster boy of the Independence movement, Mahatma Gandhi. Although Hindu nationalism has a violent history, through my research project, I claim that no ideology, secular or religious, is totally immune to violent impulses. Furthermore, religious ideologies can also drive peaceful social change. I argue this by discussing the Naxalite and Arya Samaj movements in India particularly in the 1970’s.

“CRAZY, SCARY, WEIRD: RELIGIOUS LITERACY AT GEORGETOWN”

BRITTNEY NEIHARDT

In my study, I explored how religious ‘Otherness’ is perceived by students on a pluralistic college campus. According to sociolo-

gist Riva Kastoryano in 'Codes of Otherness,' the 'Other' is defined by real or symbolic boundaries which serve to identify "the included, the excluded, the conformist, and the deviants," also known as 'Others.' Kastoryano argues that the 'Other' is simultaneously the same and strange, compared to an 'inner enemy' who is both a member and non-member of the group. To test this theory, I designed and implemented a 'religious literacy' survey. My study indicates that Georgetown students still maintain dangerous and inaccurate stereotypes about people from other religions. The inherent reactions of the survey respondents to particular religions reinforced stereotypes rather than accurately citing elements of the faith. Therefore, social, political, cultural, and institutional context is the key to religious literacy and making the 'Other' familiar. Context affects how we form opinions and once ideas are established about a religion, those notions cognitively solidify. Thus, despite discussions of diversity and understanding, the 'Other' often remains crazy, weird, and scary.

"PERFORMING HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH ASIA: THE ROLE OF THEATRE IN POLITICAL REFORM"

DEVIKA RANJAN

In a region of historic human rights struggles, South Asian political theatre encourages democratic thought on critical issues such as minority rights and right to information; it is activism through the regional performance traditions of satire, folk song, and dance. In this project, I studied this counter-institutional work in a 7 month case study of three major theatres: Ajoka Theatre in Lahore, Mandala Theatre in Kathmandu, and Shilpee Theatre in Kathmandu. I wrote four short vignettes that are representative of the thematic issues that often occur in South Asian political theatre. Paying attention to theatrical methods including, *nautanki* and *bhand*, Ajoka, Mandala, and Shilpee, I presented the democratic ideas and open dialogue that are prevalent in these performances to delineate their grassroots accessibility and entertainment-based delivery.

"RELIGION AND PERFORMANCE ART: THE INTERSECTIONS OF INTERRELIGIOUS EXPRESSION"

KATIE ROSENBERG

For this project, I investigated the intersection between faith and the arts. Despite different faith backgrounds and varying artistic passions, all of the students I interviewed found a link between their religious faith and their art form. For some, these connections were obvious: dancers who performed in religious ceremonies before their community and for God. For others, the connection was more obscure: finding ways in which skills learned

in technical theatre applied to worship services. No two students experienced this overlap in the same way, and yet all could recognize that it was there. I believe that these interests stem from a passion for community and from religious faith. For example, in my personal experience, Christian faith is based on serving one another, on loving the neighbor, and on building community. For me, theatre is much like this, too. Theatre is people with varying passions and skills coming together to tell a story that wouldn't otherwise be told. Further, this story is intended to be shared with those around oneself, and to spread some sort of message of truth. In my project, I discovered this is also the goal of religion for these students.

"FOSTERING SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR LGBTQ CHRISTIANS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD" TIMOTHY ROSENBERGER

In my final project, I connected with LGBT religious activists who worked primarily with disadvantaged immigrant communities. I traveled to London and set up a week of meetings and work with trans activist B. Beldon as well as Nigerian clergyman Rev. Jide Macaulay. Working in these communities allowed me to gain a better understanding of how I can best serve as an advocate and resource for LGBT Christians who have survived persecution and violence. I learned a great deal about specific incidences of faith-based violence occurring both in the developing world and within countries traditionally viewed as safe places for LGBT persons. I also networked with activists in Uganda, Nigeria, and Melbourne, Australia. I will continue to collect narratives and contacts and try to work with UK Christians again in the near future.

"EXPLORING THE ROLE OF THE ISMAILI ETHICAL TRADITION TO ANALYZE MEDICAL ETHICS AND GUIDE PROFESSIONAL DECISION-MAKING"

NOREEN SAJWANI

In Ismailism, moral guidance is necessary but also fluctuates for the individual and should thus be evaluated within the context and circumstances of each situation. In this project, I argued that understanding how Ismaili health care professionals use their value system to influence decisions, a greater emphasis on cultural competency, forming appropriate duties of care, and challenging the relationship between personal values and ethical practices can inform future challenges between ethics and medicine. I describe how integrating Ismaili ethics can help resolve many issues of medical ethics. Inevitably, this will not only pave how we view medical ethics within the field of health care, but it will also help other professional sectors characterize and formu-

late socially responsible practices in their respective areas.

DOYLE UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS FOCUS GROUPS

The Doyle Fellows Program hosted two campus-wide focus groups in November 2014 for an intimate discussion with their peers around interreligious and intercultural relationships on campus, a topic selected by the group. Students were asked to reflect on the Georgetown community and analyze their original expectations regarding interreligious and intercultural diversity on campus. Most students expressed surprise at the level of interreligious and intercultural diversity they experienced during their undergraduate career. Some had anticipated Georgetown would be insular and Catholic while others hoped for a more overtly “religious” campus environment. All students agreed that Georgetown was open and welcoming to race/ethnicity and religio-cultural diversity, which enabled students to explore and pursue interfaith relationships.

The discussion also focused on a more personal exploration of interfaith dating. Students suggested that while Georgetown fosters interfaith relationships, many students are still hesitant to date outside their own faith tradition. Some students noted that such relationships are possible if both people are willing to compromise and learn about each other’s practices. Others suggested that while all religions have ethical similarities, it is difficult to fully participate in rituals outside your faith tradition and community. Students noted that dating/romantic relationship is still

a “raw nerve” for many religious communities. A serious interfaith relationship, while possible, will experience many challenges related to differences in ritual, practice, and belief. Student participants also claimed that interfaith relationships are not as common as one expects, even on a campus as open to interreligious engagement and dialogue as Georgetown.

DOYLE SYMPOSIUM

In April 2015, a Doyle Fellows proposal was awarded first place at the campus-wide 2015 Doyle Symposium, which called for student proposals aimed at ending a persistent legacy of injustice on campus and identifying concrete projects through which together we can build for the common good. Devika Ranjan’s proposal, “Disturbance Art,” focused on creating a campus culture of pop-up art projects (music, dance, drawings/paintings, theater performances) that directly engages interreligious and intercultural difference, and the major issues of the day. Ranjan argued that this project will have a campus-wide impact across faculty, staff, and students and will creatively link interfaith dialogue, expression, and service work in ways meant to bring together individuals and communities who may have not participated before. Spencer Crawford received an honorable mention for his proposal, “Engaging Difference Through Our Catholic Identity.” This proposal argued that Georgetown University can improve its involvement with religious diversity by providing a worship space for each faith tradition.

STUDENT BIOS



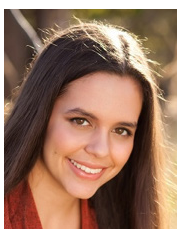
Emna Baccar is an undergraduate student in the Georgetown College class of 2015 majoring in Arabic and minoring in Theology. Over the past several years she has been involved in interfaith activities across Georgetown and in the greater DC area.



Spencer Crawford is an undergraduate class of 2016 in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service majoring in Science, Technology, and International Affairs with a certificate in Religion, Ethics, and World Affairs. At the Berkley Center, Spencer works as a research assistant for the World Faiths Development Dialogue. He previously worked as a research assistant for the Religious Freedom Project.



Muaaz Maksud is an undergraduate student in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service class of 2015, majoring in International Political Economy and completing a certificate in International Development. He is interested in the intersection of faith, culture, and politics in society. He spent summer 2014 working for the Los Angeles World Affairs Council.



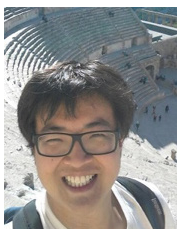
Brittany Nihardt is an undergraduate student in Georgetown College class of 2017, majoring in Government and minoring in Justice and Peace studies. She is interested in studying issues of cultural relativism. She is an intern in the Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership, as well as an active member of the Mock Trial Team and the Georgetown University Ballroom Dance Team.



Katie Rosenberg is an undergraduate student in the Georgetown College class of 2015, majoring in Theology and minoring in English and Theater and Performance Studies. She serves as the associate producer for the Mask and Bauble Dramatic Society and studied abroad at Trinity College Dublin.



Emily Coccia is an undergraduate student in the Georgetown College class of 2015 majoring in English and Government, while concurrently working on her master's degree in English through Georgetown's AB/MBA program. Her studies focus on gender and sexuality, through the lens of feminist and queer theory. Emily lives in the Female Empowerment Magis Row house and serves as the editor-in-chief of *Ye Domesday Booke*, the president of Women in Politics, and the corresponding secretary of the Philodemic Society. She is a WAGE Fellow, a Carroll Fellow, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Sigma Nu.



Timothy Loh is an undergraduate student in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service Georgetown class of 2015, majoring in Culture and Politics, and concurrently pursuing a master's degree in Arab Studies. His undergraduate degree looks at sociolinguistics in the Middle East, while his graduate degree focuses on deafness and disability in the Arab region. He spent the last summer researching deaf education in Jordan as a Lisa J. Raines Fellow. Timothy is also a Carroll Fellow, a member of the Visual Language Visual Learning (VL2) Network at Gallaudet University, and a research assistant for Dr. Yvonne Haddad at Georgetown's Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.



Ayan Mandal is an undergraduate student in the Georgetown College class of 2018, considering studying Biology, Philosophy, and Chemistry, with hopes of becoming a psychiatrist in the future. He attended an evangelical Christian high school, where he complemented Western views on religion to his family's Hindu faith. He has spent time teaching in India at a religiously run elementary school.



Devika Ranjan is an undergraduate student in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service class of 2017, majoring in Culture and Politics with a focus on Human Rights, Art and Revolution. She is interested in issues of social justice and self-expression. Devika serves as the class of 2017 representative to the SFS Academic Council and as a freshmen residential advisor, is part of Mask and Bauble Dramatic Society, and teaches Bollywood Zumba classes.



Tim Rosenberger is an undergraduate student in the Georgetown College class of 2016, majoring in English Literature and is concurrently a candidate for a master's degree in that same field. Tim's research focuses on the intersections of faith, sexual orientation, and gender. Tim is an active member of College Republicans, GU Pride, and the 1634 Society. At the Berkley Center, he works closely with Melody Fox Ahmed on the Doyle Engaging Difference Program and other initiatives. A student fellow in the 2014-2015 Doyle Undergraduate Fellows program, his project focuses on starting an antiviolence non-profit, LoveFirst, Inc.



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